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**NMSP Sanctuary Advisory Council  
2006 Work Tasks and Topics of Interest**

**Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary**

- Energy Projects
  - Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Offshore Terminals
    - Staff and Council will track status of locally proposed projects.
    - Advisory Council to receive educational presentations about LNG from invited speakers (e.g., Bill Powers).
  - Offshore Oil & Gas Activities
    - Council to receive response from Sanctuary Program regarding oil and gas resolution adopted at the November 2005 Council meeting, and learn about how issue is being addressed by other Advisory Councils.
    - Council to track outer continental shelf oil and gas inventory activities called for in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 via updates from staff or MMS representatives.
  - Emerging Energy Issues
    - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations about alternative ocean energy & its potential sources (e.g., high wind areas off coast of So. Cal., wind farms, wave energy).
    - Council to track development of any alternative projects proposed in the Santa Barbara Channel region.
- Fisheries & Aquaculture
  - Increase Sanctuary Education and Outreach on Fishing within CINMS
    - Fishing representatives (commercial and recreational) to provide educational talks to the Council.
    - Council fishing reps. and others to advise CINMS on Sanctuary-related fishing facts for use in educational products, etc.
  - Increase Understanding of Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC)
    - Advisory Council delegation to attend a meeting of the PFMC.
    - Council to extend invitation for PFMC leadership to attend/present at an Advisory Council meeting.
  - Increase Understanding of Marine Life Management Act (MLMA)

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- Council to receive educational information and/or presentations from Council reps. and/or invited guests on MLMA topics.
- Increase Understanding of State and Federal Aquaculture Legislation and Policy
  - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations about state and federal aquaculture legislation from staff, Council reps., and/or invited guests.
  - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations about NOAA and California aquaculture policy from staff, Council reps., and/or invited guests.
- Increase Knowledge About Offshore Aquaculture and the Proposed Grace Mariculture Project (or any similar locally proposed projects)
  - Staff to continue to invite Grace Mariculture Project proponents to address the Advisory Council.
  - Council to hear from other aquaculture experts, if needed or requested.
  - Council to receive NMSP aquaculture guidance/policy paper, when/if it becomes available.
- Develop an Aquaculture Report and Recommendations
  - Council to support Conservation Working Group's proposal to develop an aquaculture report and recommendations.
  - Council to review, comment on, and consider adopting the Conservation Working Group aquaculture report and recommendations.
- Management Plan
  - Release of Draft EIS and Draft Management Plan (DEIS/DMP)
    - Council to receive presentation from staff on DMP/DEIS
    - Advisory Council and interested Working Groups comment on DMP/DEIS during 60+ day review period.
    - Advisory Council to assist in raising public awareness and understanding of the DEIS/DMP.
  - Release of Final EIS and Final Management Plan (FEIS/FMP).
    - Council to receive presentation from staff on FMP/FEIS.
    - Council to assist in raising public awareness and understanding of the FEIS/FMP.
  - Development of Supplemental EIS (SEIS) to Consider Sanctuary Boundary Redefinition

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- Council to receive educational presentation about history of this issue, boundary concepts under consideration, and how the NCCOS biogeography study will be incorporated.
- Marine Acoustics
  - CINMS Response to Advisory Council Recommendations on Marine Acoustics
    - Council to receive periodic reports from staff (or invited partners) on progress toward addressing the Advisory Council marine acoustics recommendations.
    - Council to receive periodic updates on acoustic monitoring project from Dr. John Hildebrand and/or his partners.
    - Council to receive educational information and/or presentation from representative of Marine Mammal Commission's Advisory Committee on Acoustic Impacts on Marine Mammals (held its final meeting in September 2005, recommendations due to Marine Mammal Commission in February 2006).
    - Staff to invite shipping industry representative(s) to provide a presentation to the Advisory Council on industry efforts to mitigate vessel noise impacts.
    - Possibly ask Research Activities Panel (or other group of invited experts) to advise on how to address science-based recommendations provided by the Advisory Council.
    - Council to receive information and/or presentation from Council Navy rep. and/or other Navy rep. on Navy low frequency active sonar (LFA) projects and Navy efforts to mitigate LFA impacts on marine life.
- Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
  - Environmental Review Process for Consideration of Establishing Additional Marine Reserves/Marine Conservation Areas within CINMS
    - Council to receive staff progress reports on development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).
    - Council to provide comments and assist with constituent outreach once DEIS is publicly released.
  - Biological monitoring program oversight and evaluation of existing Channel Islands Marine Protected Areas
    - Advisory Council and public to receive periodic reports on monitoring program implementation and results.
    - Research Activities Panel to review monitoring programs and results (details of this role to be determined with the RAP).

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- Socio-economic monitoring program oversight and evaluation of existing Channel Islands MPAs.
  - Advisory Council and public to receive periodic reports on monitoring program implementation and results.
  - RAP to review monitoring programs and results (details of this role to be determined with the RAP).
- Increase Sanctuary Education and Outreach on Marine Protected Areas within CINMS
  - Council reps. and others to advise CINMS on Sanctuary-related MPA facts for use in educational products, etc.
  - Council to work with Sanctuary Education Team (SET) on further development of marine reserves education/outreach products (e.g., presentation).
- Increase Understanding of Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA)
  - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations from Council reps. and/or invited guests on MLPA topics
- Tribal MPAs
  - Chumash Community Working Group to explore the topic of "Tribal MPAs" and discuss with the Advisory Council.
- Water Quality
  - CINMS Response to Advisory Council Recommendations on Water Quality
    - Council to receive periodic reports from staff (or invited partners) on progress toward addressing the Advisory Council water quality recommendations from September 2005.
    - Council to receive educational presentations from staff (or invited partners) on Sanctuary water quality topics.
  - CINMS Water Quality Program Development
    - Council to convene a Water Quality Working Group (WQWG).
    - CINMS staff, WQWG, and Advisory Council to work with Donna Meyers on issue characterization and assessment, gap analysis, developing WQ program goals and objectives, management actions and implementation mechanisms.
  - Increase Knowledge About Domoic Acid / Red Tide
    - Council to hear from experts (e.g., Peter Howarth, CA Dept. of Health Services, David Caron of USC) to gain an understanding of sources and effects of domoic acid in the marine environment.

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➤ Other

- Agency Updates and Reports
  - Council to receive periodic brief agency reports to learn more about what the agency does relative to CINMS and to receive more information about existing or planned activities that might be of interest to Council members.
  - Staff to ask Council DOD reps. for assistance in bringing to the Advisory Council information and/or presentations about DOD projects and the Defense Reauthorization Act.
- Artificial Reefs
  - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations from artificial reef experts.
- Biogeography Study of CINMS and Surrounding Waters (complete)
  - Council to receive additional educational presentation on final study results, if requested.
- Chumash Education and Outreach
  - Regular Chumash Working Group meetings to be convened; report outcomes to the Council.
  - Council to learn from presentations by Chumash people concerning cultural values of the Channel Islands and surrounding waters.
  - Chumash Community Working Group to work with staff to understand and help shape the Chumash cultural components of Sanctuary programs; discuss and present to Advisory Council.
  - Chumash Community Working Group to discuss Government-to-government relations with staff; provide updates to and discuss with the Advisory Council.
  - See also item on Tribal MPAs.
- Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific Field Trip (pending an invitation)
  - Council to participate in a field trip (possibly in April).
  - Council to engage in discussion about the continued development of a partnership between the NMSP/CINMS and the Aquarium.
- Non-Native Species
  - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations about non-native species (e.g., mitten crab, Undaria kelp) from invited guests (e.g., NMSP West Coast

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Regional Office, reps. of CA Ocean Protection Council's Biodiversity Council).

- Ocean Protection Council
  - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations about the Ocean Protection Council from Advisory Council CA Resources Agency reps. and/or invited guests,
- Advisory Council Retreat
  - Optional Council retreat in fall 2006.
- Sanctuary Education Team (SET) Outreach Presentations about the Sanctuary
  - Council to receive preview of SET presentations; endorse the products.
  - Council members and Working Groups to use SET presentations for outreach purposes, as appropriate.
- Sanctuary-Wide Integrated Monitoring (SWIM)
  - Council to receive educational information and/or presentations about SWIM and sanctuary condition reports from staff and/or NMSP rep.

### **Cordell Bank NMS**

- Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council researched, and passed a resolution opposing oil and gas exploration within the Sanctuary.
- During 2006, the Council will investigate the latest technologies and protocols considering the use of dispersants in spill response. This knowledge base will be utilized to advise Sanctuary management on these topics and with any concerns regarding the effects of dispersants on the marine environment in and around Cordell Bank.
- The Council will investigate marine acoustics issues and effects as a result of oil and gas exploration, scientific studies, etc...
- Cable laying and ocean floor disturbance will be looked at in relation to recent utility company inquiries.
- Council meetings will also continue to feature scientific presentations of Cordell Bank, including Habitat-Based Assessment of Structure Forming Megafaunal Invertebrates and Fishes on Cordell Bank, as well as Management Plan Review updates and progress.

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- Overall list of major topics is:
  - Dispersants use and technologies, and spill response in the sanctuaries
  - Oil and gas exploration on the west coast
  - Acoustics issues
  - Cable laying
  - Offshore aquaculture
  - Scientific monitoring at Cordell Bank

### **Fagatele Bay NMS**

- Management Plan Review: This has been postponed due to budget cuts but we are definitely moving forward as the year progresses. The Council has been introduced to the process so they have an idea on how long it will take.
- Enforcement: This has and will continue to be the topic of discussion. With the lack of manpower and the fishblasting incidents that has repeatedly occurred in the past six months, the council will focus on coming up with a plan on how to target the fishing population.

### **Florida Keys NMS**

- Birds in the FKNMS; pelagics and migrations and all the things that occur on their way through: fish hooks, fishing line, vehicle strikes, cell phone towers, loss of breeding beaches due to storm erosion and rising sea-level, etc.
- Listing of two acroporid coral species under the Endangered Species Act. The council is part of NOAA Fisheries' public outreach effort in listing the first marine invertebrate as threatened. This could have rather significant impacts on a lot of the boating and fishing community, as 'take' is rather broadly defined.
- Sponging: There is a very small population of individuals who still make a living from harvesting sponges. The Keys decided a few years ago that this activity should not continue and asked the council to weigh in on the topic. The council held a day-long workshop, and discovered that the environmental impact is minimal, but a study was funded through Old Dominion University. The council will hear the results of the study soon and revisit the issue.
- Lobster trap damage: There is an ongoing social equity/allocation issue between spiny lobster divers and trap fishermen, regarding the placing of

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illegal debris on the bottom to concentrate lobster for the divers. Dumping trash is prohibited and uses up a lot of law enforcement time and effort. The council revisits this topic about every other year.

- Microbial communities on coral: There is a lot of discussion about the notion of "resilience" in coral reefs. If the factors that allow some corals to survive bleaching events and disease outbreaks could be isolated, management strategies could be developed to take advantage of this knowledge. The NGO community has come up with some options. A scientist at MOTE marine lab, partially funded by FKNMS, is working on the interplay between various bacteria and viruses in coral mucus as a potential mechanism for predicting bleaching, disease and morbidity outcomes.
- Examining the interface between NMSA and Magnuson-Stevens. The council will probably invite someone from the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council and our own council member Tony Iarocci from the South Atlantic FMC.
- It is the five-year anniversary of implementation of the Tortugas Ecological Reserve, so the council will review the efficacy of no-take zones.

#### **Flower Garden Banks NMS**

- Management Plan Review (specific topics TBD)

#### **Gray's Reef NMS**

- Fishing regulations in NMS: All Sanctuary Advisory Council Chairs will be involved in discussions of the new procedures for determining fishing regulations in NMS. The GRNMS Council will likely receive a presentation on the topic at the April meeting in order to give Chair Joe Kimmel more information to discuss at the national meeting the following week in DC.
- Research area consideration: The GRNMS Advisory Council has been significantly involved in evaluation of the concept of a designated research area in the sanctuary. A working group of the Council was instrumental in recommendations that were adopted by NOAA to proceed with a public process to further examine the concept. The process will be carefully observed by the Council when scoping begins later this year.
- Final Management Plan/Final EIS: The FMP/FEIS for GRNMS is expected to be completed and released later this year. The Advisory Council will play an important role in that release.



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- Performance Evaluation: As the FMP/FEIS is released, a procedure for evaluating performance will be established that involves the Advisory Council. The Council will also be involved in development of the site's new "condition report" which begins this year.
- Outreach/Communications on New Regulations: The FMP/FEIS will include new regulations. It is expected that the Advisory Council will play a role in helping to disseminate that information among constituents.

### **Gulf of the Farallones NMS**

- January 12, 2006 Meeting
  - Budget
  - B-WET
  - California Academy of Sciences
  - GFNMS 25th Anniversary
  - GFNMS Facility Master Plan
  - Mavericks Surf Contest
  - Marine Life Protection Act letter
  - Socioeconomic Impact of Fishing Activities in the GFNMS
  - San Francisco Exemption Area
- April 13, 2006 Meeting
  - LT Briefing
  - Ocean noise
  - SAC elections
  - Regional Science Plan
  - SIMoN
  - CA Ocean Stewardship Campaign
  - National Chairs and Coordinators Meeting
  - Fishing Wiring Diagram
  - Dispersants
- July 13, 2006 Meeting
  - 25th Anniversary
  - Capitol Hill Oceans Week
  - San Francisco Exemption Area
  - Management Plan Review Update
  - National Chairs and Coordinators Meeting
  - Mavericks Surf Contest
- October 19-20, 2006 Retreat
  - SAC RETREAT
  - Oil spill response

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- December 8 2006
  - Joint meeting with MBNMS
  - Topics to be determined

### **Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS**

- Whale-Vessel Interactions: This continues to be an issue of concern in HIHWNMS and the Council has actively worked to minimize these interactions by focusing their efforts on such activities as boater outreach and helping to draft and assess whale avoidance plans.
- Aquaculture: This has become a recent topic of discussion for the council. They have approved a position document on a specific proposal and established a working group to assess the issue further.
- Including additional species in the Sanctuary: In preparation for the sanctuary's management plan review that will take place in the near future, the council has begun to assess whether additional species should be included in the sanctuary's scope.
- Budget Needs: The council has continued to encourage the importance of increased funding for not only HIHWNMS, but also the Sanctuary program as a whole.
- Water Quality: The council continues to express its concern for water quality in the sanctuary and has continuously encouraged the development of pump-out at small boat harbors around the state.
- SAC Membership: The council also decided to focus their efforts on reviewing the composition membership and member's roles (i.e. voting verses non-voting), and they have assigned a committee to look into this further.

### **Monitor NMS**

- Topics TBD (first council meeting in May 2006).

### **Monterey Bay NMS**

- Oil and gas exploration: Following up on the MBNMS/GFNMS joint resolution encouraging a legislative amendment exempting the waters of all

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NMS sites from the "OCS Inventory" contained in the Omnibus Energy Act of 2005.

- MPR process: How do we keep these reviews from turning into a ten-year process?
- Life after the MPR: What will MBNMSAC do after the MP is finalized?
- MPA's-fed and state: Continue following and participating where needed in the state MLPA process and the MBNMS MPA process.
- Strengthening SAC effectiveness: How to strengthen the effectiveness of the advisory council with the Sanctuary and the community through making changes in retreats, meeting times, working groups, etc.
- Regionalization across the country: What difference are the regional offices making to the NMS sites in the rest of the country?

#### **Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and Proposed Sanctuary**

- Sanctuary designation is the biggest topic the NWHI RAC is/will be dealing with in 2006.
- Closely related to sanctuary designation, the following topics will be discussed at RAC meetings in the upcoming year:
  - Permitting - the types of permits issued, regulations developed and reporting requirements from other sanctuaries and the respective council input on that process
  - Indigenous issues - (cultural access and gathering rights) within different sanctuaries and if/how those are dealt with by the sanctuaries respective councils

#### **Olympic Coast NMS**

- Outreach
  - Continue web page enhancement. We are starting to use the Advisory Council web page for notices and document posting. There may be other uses or improvements in functionality that would help enhance the page. Either the Education Subcommittee or a workgroup could come up with ideas for enhancing the page.

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- Identify opportunities for presentations. In the past, some council members have arranged for Sanctuary staff to speak at events or organizational meetings that members attend. Members will be polled to see if they have ideas on any opportunities for presentations. Opportunities will be explored for presentations outside the regular Sanctuary communities.
- Finalize State of the Sanctuary Report. The advisory council made initial comments on the State of the Sanctuary Report in 2005. It is anticipated that both Sanctuary staff and the advisory council will develop a threats assessment for the Sanctuary that can be used as starting points for the management plan review process. After doing the threats assessment exercise, the advisory council should take another look at the State of the Sanctuary Report.
- Volunteers – Beach Cleanup
  - Beach cleanup endorsement and other support. The Council will be requested to endorse the annual Beach Cleanup on the coast as it has done in years past. Council members are invited to participate in the cleanup.
- Management Plan Review
  - Threat assessment workshop. In September, the council will conduct a workshop on assessing threats to the sanctuary as a precursor to initiating the management planning review process. The council may also take the step of trying to rank the threats. This meeting would be open to the public and be considered as one of the 5 scheduled advisory council meetings
- Contingency Planning
  - Presentation on oil spill ecological risk assessment report and related issues. The U.S. Coast Guard has been conducting a series of workshops under the national ecological risk assessment (ERA) process for the Washington coast. The goal of these workshops is to enhance recovery from an oil spill and minimize impacts to the ecosystem as a whole as well as allow participants a chance to give recommendations to the Regional Response Teams (RRT) and United States Coast Guard on subjects such as a) equipment staging areas, b) equipment needs, c) areas to be protected, and d) areas where gaps in our knowledge exist. The work of the group has focused on the issue of dispersant usage. Washington Department of Ecology is working on updating oil spill contingency regulations. Sanctuary staff has been participating in both efforts. The council will hear updates on both.

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- Olympic Coast Alliance has initiated a Citizen's Oil Spill Response program to train volunteers. The council will invited a representative from the organization to make a presentation on the program.
- Resource Threat Reduction – Vessel traffic monitoring and derelict gear removal
  - Vessel traffic compliance briefing. The advisory council will be briefed on the status of the compliance level with the Sanctuaries voluntary Area to be Avoided as well as other developments in tracking vessels in the sanctuary.
  - Derelict fishing gear removal project. The advisory council will receive an update on the status of the project to remove derelict fishing gear from locations in and around the sanctuary.
- Advisory Council current and emerging issues
  - Navy Range Extension Proposal DEIS. The Council will continue to receive updates on the progress of the Navy NW Range Extension Proposal. The Council may decide to comment upon the Draft Environmental Impact Statement as it becomes available. If the Council so decides, then the Resource Protection Committee or a working group could develop draft comments for the Council to consider for adoption. The DEIS might be available as early as May.
  - Following on the council's comments on proposed regulatory changes regarding the acoustic thresholds for determining "take" under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the advisory council workgroup on acoustics will give an update and possibly develop comments for the draft environmental impact statement.
  - In response to the two oceans commissions' reports last year, the State of Washington, under the lead of the Governor's office has established an Ocean Policy Working Group to make recommendations on needed changes in Washington State law and/or departmental initiatives that enhance the state's ability to protect its ocean resources. An initial report is due in January on possible initial changes and actions. A more detailed set of recommendations is expected in January 2007 to address a broader range of issues.
  - The advisory council will schedule a background presentation on deep sea coral/soft sponge communities.
  - The advisory council will continue to monitor the development of the Aqua Energy project to develop a test set of energy generating wave

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buoys in the sanctuary, including the issuance of a draft environmental assessment that may be issued sometime during the year.

**Stellwagen Bank NMS**

- Management Plan Review

**Thunder Bay NMS & Underwater Preserve**

- Management Plan Review